

Reagan Library Topic Guide – Superfund/EPA

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White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) [Subject Files](#)

White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) [Alphabetical Files](#).

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SUPERFUND/EPA

SEE ALSO: [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) Officials, Investigation of](#)

SCOPE NOTE

Congressional investigations and hearings into the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grew out of routine budgetary oversight of the hazardous waste laws being carried out by the Agency. Chief among these laws was the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, commonly known as the Superfund act. A key provision of this act was the establishment of the “Superfund” trust fund, by means of a special tax on the chemical and petroleum industries, for cleaning up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.

Investigations leading to the six-year continuing investigation of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator and the key agency appointees began in 1982. Allegations of mishandling the \$1.6 billion Superfund monies began almost immediately after the establishment of the fund. In mid-September 1982, Congressman John Dingell of Michigan requested any and all information on the ongoing clean-up of three Superfund sites: Tar Creek, Oklahoma, Stringfellow Acid Pits, California and Berlin and Farro, Michigan His investigation was for the use of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation. The EPA signaled the first troubles in responding to this request stating in a letter that some documents were being withheld as they contained “enforcement-sensitive information.” As a result Dingell’s subcommittee issued a subpoena for withheld documents and this was followed by a subpoena for all documents on EPA priority sites under the Superfund Act by Congressman Elliot Levitas , Chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee.

Eventually, six congressional panels were probing allegations of political manipulation, “sweetheart” deals, conflicts of interest, perjury, and destruction of documents by EPA employees. Their investigations focused on two particular officials – EPA head Anne M. Burford (aka Anne Gorsuch), and Rita Lavelle, the head of EPA’s waste management program.

As the White House Counsel staff, the Department of Justice and President Reagan started actually reviewing the material from the EPA, concerns about the agencies actual handling of the Superfund surfaced. At this point, President Reagan asked the Department of Justice (DOJ) to start its own investigation of the situation at the EPA.

As a result of viewing all the documents, Rita Lavelle, Assistant Administrator for the Waste Management program appeared to have conflicts of interest with her management of the Superfund monies, especially of the Stringfellow California waste site. She was asked to resign and when she refused to do so was fired by the President on February 7, 1983.

The material contained within the Reagan Library holdings consists of White House responses to requests for material, including photocopies of material provided to Congress and the Department of Justice; chronologies of the investigation; notes on meeting with EPA official and DOJ officials; press conferences; press clippings on the entire investigation; and final reports.

There was a further investigation and Independent Counsel regarding this matter in the second administration. The investigation was focused on the Department of Justice's role in the decision to withhold EPA material from Congress. If the White House records in this investigation dealt with the Superfund, they are include with this topic guide.

WHORM SUBJECT FILE

[FG006-01](#) case files 107784, 111039, 353564, 367562

[FG122](#) case files 118007, 123926, 126788, 126791, 126832, 127012, 128116, 128374, 128380, 128681, 128597, 128890, 129955, 131161, 144774, 171234, 254807

[FI001-01](#) case files 418333, 419406

[FI004](#) case files 025872, 208589, 245450, 245475, 326083, 346815, 364240, 396028

[FI006](#) case files 105725, 243624, 243625, 251554, 251848, 253475, 255563, 257679, 261669, 285212, 294008, 294793, 294850, 294851, 294852, 300327, 305994, 306534, 307984, 307985, 316861, 322788, 335448, 339081, 339186, 339242, 339790, 330334, 343550, 345113, 347357, 364093, 375964, 376136, 377856, 384829, 391010, 401438, 401955, 403234, 418577, 419044, 419280, 419401, 419741, 420027, 420335, 420708, 421896, 427983, 427992, 428704, 428763, 428906, 428942, 428974, 428979, 429004, 429005, 429027, 429074, 429080, 429082, 429083, 429086, 429109, 429125, 429133, 429144, 429146, 429154, 429156, 429162, 429164, 429174, 429182, 429185, 429213, 429299, 429300, 429330, 429337, 429364, 429371, 429375, 429396, 429397, 429407, 409413, 429416, 429490, 429528, 429538, 429572, 429582, 429594, 429661, 429662, 429679, 431001, 431966, 439848, 440065, 440423, 440840, 440841, 440842, 440847, 441001, 441196, 441223, 441228, 441247, 441250, 441260, 441261, 441287, 441311, 441312, 441313, 441336, 441339, 441342, 441397, 441399, 441425, 441431, 441433, 441439, 441448, 441842, 442130, 442349, 450818, 450013, 451170, 451286, 451370, 451371, 451395, 451476, 451736, 451908, 452196, 452204, 453392, 453474, 454127, 464289, 464294, 482684, 490620, 490621, 490622, 490623, 490624, 490625

[FI008](#) case file 428955

[FI010](#) case files 417283, 430058, 430377

[FI010-01](#) case file 391239

[FI010-02](#) case files 346852, 358660, 400851, 428687, 429777

[HE007](#) case file 118484

[HE007-01](#) case file 344246

[HE007-03](#) case file 030180, 127827, 223590, 366456, 429639

[LE](#) case file 031336

[MC](#) case file 438099

[PE001](#) case file 099581

[PQ](#) case file 044623

[TA](#) case file 126518

[TA004-11](#) case file 394769

WHITE HOUSE STAFF AND OFFICE FILES

CABINET AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF
Clarey, Donald A.: Files
OA14307
Superfund (1)(2)

COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS
Council of Economic Advisors: Staff Economists Records
Series I: B – (Steve De Canio)
OA 4002
Superfund

COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF THE
Bryan, Patricia Mack: Files
OA19241
EPA Superfund Chronology

Cohen, Benedict: Files
CFOA 1340
Counsel's Office Memos [re: Rita Lavelle]
EPA Code of Ethics
EPA Files 1) Lavelle Trial, 2) Counsel's Office Memos throughout Inquiries
[EPA Investigation Documents]
[EPA Investigation Material I] (1)-(6)
[EPA Investigation Material II] (1)-(9)
[EPA Investigation Material III] (1)-(10)

[EPA Investigation Material IV] (1)-(3)
[EPA Investigation Material]: Brown, Michael (1)(2)
[EPA Investigation Material]: Department of Justice Memos (1)(2)
[EPA Investigation Material - Dingell Letter]
[EPA Investigation Material]: Fuller
[EPA Investigation Material]: Levitas Agreement
[EPA Investigation Material - Stringfellow Site] (1)-(3)
[EPA Investigation Material]: Subpoena Requests
[EPA Investigation - Stringfellow Site] (1)-(4)
EPA Materials (RAH's Desk) (1)-(3)
[EPA Summaries of Congressional Requests]
Miscellaneous EPA - Olson Independent Counsel (IC)
Olson, Theodore B. (Independent Counsel Inquiry) Responses to Document Production
Request of 04/10/1987
Presidential Press Conference: Request to Interview
[Senior Staff Meeting Action Items re: EPA / Gorsuch December 1982-September 1983]
[Surrogate Briefing Transmittal Memo]
U.S. v. House of Representatives (Gorsuch Contempt Case) (1)-(5)
WH Documents re: EPA: Contact with Lavelle
WH Documents re: EPA: Documents Noted
WH Documents re: EPA: Senior Staff Memos

Cooksey, Sherrie: Files (Counsel)

OA 11736
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Gorsuch 1982]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Gorsuch 1983]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [John Daniels 1982]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [John Daniels 1983]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Lavelle Telephone
Log]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Lavelle 1981]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Lavelle 1982]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Lavelle 1983]
EPA Calendars, etc. Submitted to Hill, Courtesy Copies to WH [Lavelle /Etta
Janiszewski 1982-1983]
SMC/Environmental Protection Agency Investigative Report

OA 11737
EPA Letters
SMC/Executive Privilege - Environmental Protection Agency (1)(2)
For Dick Hauser [EPA Calendar Bob Perry 1981]
For Dick Hauser [EPA Calendar Bob Perry 1982]
For Dick Hauser [EPA Calendar Bob Perry 1983]
For Dick Hauser [EPA Calendar Perry's Secretary 1981]
For Dick Hauser [EPA Calendar Perry's Secretary 1982]
For Dick Hauser [EPA Telephone Logs] (1)(2)
For Dick Hauser [EPA Telephone Logs Perry] (1)(2)
Investigations: Medas/Lavelle

OA 11738

SMC/Rodino - Environmental Protection Agency Inquiry (1)-(4)

Hauser, Richard A.: Files

OA 11136

Superfund

OA 12996

EPA - List of White House Files

EPA Probe - Exchange of Letters of the Attorney General & Rodino

Executive Privilege – Dingell – EPA (1)-(5)

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: House Judiciary Committee Hearing
and Notes 12/05/1986 (1)-(3)

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: House Judiciary Committee's Reply to
RAH Letter to Rodino

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Lungren Motion, Rodino New Release
& Rodino Letter to Meese

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Press Coverage - House Judiciary
Committee / EPA Investigation (1)(2)

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Correspondence re: Legal
Representation (Lacovara, DOJ, RAH)

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Appointment Records for 12/13/1982 &
12/14/1982 for RAH

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Lacovara Letter to DOJ / Keeney March
1986 - Draft

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Lacovara Letter to John Keeney / DOJ
04/14/1986

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Attorney - Client Privilege Act of 1986
H.R. 4245

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: *Peter Tavoulareas v. Philip Piro, Peter
Tavoulareas v. Washington Post*

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Memorandum for Robert Perry from
RAH 01/13/1983

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: RAH Notes of 01/12/1983 and
01/13/1983 re: Perry / Dingell

House Judiciary Committee / EPA Investigation: Perry Letter to Dingell 12/13/1982

Hewitt, Hugh: Files

OA12260

EPA Investigation: House Judiciary Committee

OA12262

Superfund Complaint

Owen, Deborah K.: Files

OA13351

Superfund

Roberts, John G. Jr.: Files

Box 22

[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Anne Burford Testimony, 09/28/1983\]](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Chronology\]](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[General\]](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[H.R. 2912, DOJ 1984 Authorization Bill\]](#)

Box 23

[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(1 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(2 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(3 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(4 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(5 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(6 of 7\)](#)
[Environmental Protection Agency – \[Lawsuit\] \(7 of 7\)](#)
[JGR/Environmental Protection Agency – \[Notes\]](#)

Box 51

[JGR – Superfund](#)

Waller, David: Files

OA 12686

Richard A. Hauser – EPA Hearings Before House Committee on the Judiciary

Counsel to the President, Office of the: Investigations: Records

Box 11

EPA Chronologies – October 1982-August 1984

EPA / Notes from Meeting of EPA Attorneys with EPA Office of Solid Waste &
Emergency Response – 09/07/1982

Justice Department - Notes from Meeting 10/01/1982

Box 12

EPA / Press Conference Q & A's Statements February 1983 (1)(2)

Perry, Robert M. / Statement for *Environmental News*

Stringfellow Site, January 1983-March 1983

Lavelle, Rita (1)-(5)

Box 13

Internal Chronology / Summary of EPA Issues February 1983 (1)-(3)

Pending Congressional Requests for Information [As of February 1983] (Binder)
(1)-(3)

[Documents of Agreement re: Production of Documents - EPA Investigation
02/18/1983]

EPA / Staff Contacts February 1983-March 1983

[EPA/Staff Contacts – Craig Fuller, May 1983]

Testimony (Lavelle) 02/23/1983

Box 14

[Report of Sub-Committee on Superfund Administration, etc.] 09/29/1983 (1)-(4)

EPA / Miscellaneous October 1982-June 1983 (1)-(3)

[Working Papers re: Document Submittal - EPA Investigation - I] (1)(2)

Box 15

[Working Papers re: Document Submittal - EPA Investigation - I] (3)-(5)
[Working Papers re: Document Submittal - EPA Investigation - II] (1)-(6)
[Working Papers re: Document Submittal - EPA Investigation - III] (1)-(4)
[Working Papers re: Document Submittal - EPA Investigation - IV] (1)-(6)

Box 16

EPA Inquiry (Hold) 1982-1987
EPA - Press
EPA / Press Briefings - News Articles (1)-(4)
EPA / Clippings (1)-(3)
[EPA Press Clippings] I. Enforcement of Super Fund (1)-(8)

Box 17

[EPA Press Clippings] VII DOJ/Lavelle
[EPA Press Clippings] VIII White House/Lavelle Firing (1)-(4)

Box 18

EPA/Rodino [Correspondence re: DOJ Investigation] March 1983-October 1984
List and Notes re Document Sources – Olson/EPA Investigation]
June Document Production to Alexia Morrison – Reviewed by Chris Cox, Ben
Cohen, Pat Bryan – Summary of Documents 1982-1983 Documents
[5] Unidentified [Unsorted Documents for Olson/EPA Investigation] (1)(2)

Box 19

[5] Unidentified [Unsorted Documents for Olson/EPA Investigation] (3)-(8)
[27] Chronology of Events
[49] 20 CFOA 437 [Chronologies, October 1982-August 1984]
[CFOA 437 – Not on Folder Inventory – re: EPA Investigation and White House
Contacts with EPA]

Box 20

[69] Tab R [Memo Jim Medas to Larry Speakes re Contacts with Rita Lavelle]
[94] Memo Craig Fuller to Fred Fielding re: Lavelle Termination, and Robert
Perry, 02/09/1983
[95] Chronology of Events Lavelle Termination

Box 21

[110] 20 EPA Inquiry – Hold [Miscellaneous Material Mostly re Rita Lavelle
Including Some of Her Work Product]
House Judiciary Committee Report on EPA Superfund – DOJ Incident (1)-(4)

Box 22

House Judiciary Committee Report on EPA Superfund – DOJ Incident (5)
Document Production Request of 04/10/1987: 7. Rita M. Lavelle (1)

Box 23

Document Production Request of 04/10/1987: 7. Rita M. Lavelle (2)-(5)

Box 25

#3 BSCohen/WHO (Sherrie Cooksey File) Ben Cohen (Originals) Miscellaneous
EPA-DOJ-White House Superfund Documents (1)-(6)

Box 26

#3 BSCohen/WHO (Sherrie Cooksey File) Ben Cohen (Originals) Miscellaneous
EPA-DOJ-White House Superfund Documents (7)-(10)

EXECUTIVE CLERK, OFFICE OF THE
Executive Clerk, Office of the: Bill Reports
Box 75

10/17/1986 H.R. 2005 [Superfund Amendments of 1986] (1)-(6)

Box 76

10/17/1986 H.R. 2005 [Superfund Amendments of 1986] (7)

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF
Spencer, Susan K.: Files
OA 15708
Superfund

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF
Harlow, Bryce Larry: Files
OA18191
Superfund

Kennedy, Nancy: Files
OA18527
Superfund

Oglesby, M.B., Jr.: Files (Legislative Affairs)
OA13000
Superfund

Risque, Nancy J.: Files (Legislative Affairs)
OA 12596
Superfund (1)-(3)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT, OFFICE OF
Davis, Randall E.: Files

Box 2

Environment – Superfund – Background Papers
Environment – Superfund – Draft Language (1)-(5)
Environment – Superfund – Federal Cause of Action
Environment - Superfund: Financing Options (1)(2)
Environment - Superfund: General (1)-(5)

Box 3

Environment - Superfund: General (6)(7)
Environment - Superfund: Options
Environment - Superfund: Press Statement and Transmittal

Environment - Superfund: Victim's Compensation

Box 7

Cabinet Council on Natural Resources and Environment: 02/12/1985, Superfund /
Overview of World Petroleum Prices / Clean Water / Endangered Species (with
President

Mares, Jan W.: Files

OA19369

Superfund & State & Local Government Fiscal Responsibility

Possible Congressional or Administration Action & Effect on Superfund

Hazardous Wastes, Superfund & Toxic Substances 10/23/1986 – 10/25/1986

Svahn, John A. "Jack": Files

OA 13531

Superfund (1)-(4)

OA 14608

[Superfund]

PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF THE

President, Office of the: Presidential Briefing Papers: Records

Box 39

01/17/1984 (case file 273350)

Box 54

02/12/1985 (case file 318712)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF

Gibson, Thomas F., III: Files (Public Affairs)

OA13092

Superfund

Public Affairs, Office of: Records

OA9019

[Superfund – Proposed Priorities List] (1)-(3)

PUBLIC LIAISON, OFFICE OF

Archie, Timothy R.: Files

OA 17787

Superfund (1)-(4)

Danner, Donald: Files

OA15703

Superfund

Maseng, Mari: Files (Public Liaison)

OA14574

Superfund (1)-(3)

Webber, Mildred: Files
OA17991
Superfund